

Frequently Asked Questions About Bus Stops

How many bus stops are there in Tempe and how many of them have benches and shelters? There are more than 800 bus stops in Tempe and nearly all of them have a bench. Over one third have a shelter and two thirds have a trash can.

Who installs benches and shelters at the bus stops? Within the Valley Metro system, individual cities are responsible for building and maintenance of bus stops within their city limits.

Are Tempe's bus stops accessible for people with disabilities? 98 percent of Tempe's bus stops meet and exceed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design guidelines, meaning each stop has a solid clear surface where a bus ramp can be used, and each stop with a shelter has a clear area under the shelter canopy large enough to accommodate a person using a wheelchair. Tempe's ADA compliance rate is the highest in Arizona.

Do all bus stops have schedules posted? All bus stops except express route stops have schedules for each route that serves the stop.

Who cleans the bus stops and how often? The City of Tempe has a maintenance crew that cleans each stop at least once a week, depending on how heavily the stop is used. Many of the more popular stops are cleaned once a day.

Why are bus stops located on the far side of intersections? The City places bus stops on the far side of intersections for safety reasons. Overall, a stopped bus on the far side creates fewer traffic conflicts than at the near side (where drivers are blocked from making a right turn, or may go around the bus and make a right turn in front of it). Also, bus passengers are more likely to cross at the signalized crosswalks, and the bus is better able to safely re-enter traffic. Placing stops at the far side is the regional standard based on numerous traffic engineering studies.

How does the City decide where to build shelters? In general, the City builds shelters at bus stops that are the most heavily used, usually at major intersections where passengers are likely to transfer from one route to another.

How does the City decide where to build pull-out bays? Since pull-outs are relatively expensive (more than \$100,000 each), the City makes sure they are placed where they are most needed. In 2000, the City developed a pull-out prioritization study that ranks each intersection in Tempe based on traffic volume per lane and bus frequency -- the locations where the most traffic is delayed by the largest number of buses are the highest priorities. The study is updated as new pull-outs are built and traffic volumes change.

Can the City make developers pay for bus stop improvements? In the case of large projects, developers are required to dedicate an easement and pay for construction of shelters and pull-outs where they are needed. For smaller projects, however, the City can only require dedication of an easement, and the City would pay for installation of a shelter or pull-out.

How many shelters and pull-outs does the City build? Since voters approved the half-cent sales tax for transit in 1996, the City has added more than 80 pull-out bays (both through City projects and developer contributions) and more than 150 shelters. Eight pull-outs were added in 2006 along with about 20 shelters.

Why are shelters or pull-outs not built in locations where they seem to be the most needed? Often bus stops are constrained by lack of right-of-way -- that is, the City does not own enough land along the street to install a shelter or pull-out. In many cases the City is able to

acquire an easement for construction of bus stop improvements but there are also instances where an easement would conflict with required parking or even a building.

Can anything be done where there isn't sufficient right-of-way? The City has recently begun installing "mini-shelters," smaller versions of the standard shelters that can fit in places where standard shelters will not fit.

Why are Tempe's bus benches and trash cans turquoise? We had to decide on a color and it was the 1990's. What can we say -- it could have been worse. They could have been mauve. Aside from the color issue, they have a rubbery coating that fades and gets grimy. In 2006 the City began installing new benches with a smooth green finish and brown trash cans.